



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **OPIC TO ORGANIZE CONFERENCE TO ENCOURAGE U.S. INVESTMENT IN MIDDLE EAST**

Washington, D.C. – Identifying new opportunities for U.S. investment in the broader Middle East will be the goal of an international conference organized by the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) in 2008, OPIC President and CEO Robert Mosbacher, Jr. announced today.

Called *Access to Opportunity in the Middle East*, the OPIC conference will be held May 5-7, 2008 at the Kempinski Hotel Ishtar, Dead Sea, Jordan. It will focus on OPIC eligible countries and areas in the broader Middle East region, including Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, West Bank and Gaza, and Yemen.

It is modeled after successful OPIC regional conferences in Bucharest in 2004, Marrakech in 2005, Cape Town in 2006, and San Salvador in 2007, which together drew a total of more than 1000 U.S. and local businesses to learn about investment opportunities in their respective regions.

For participants, the conference will offer a unique opportunity to hear from leading investment experts, U.S. businesses currently investing in the broader Middle East, financial institutions operating in the region, and U.S. government officials. Conference sessions will focus on access to credit, to low- and middle-income housing, and infrastructure. Speakers will also discuss investment opportunities in sectors such as tourism, franchising, information technology and energy.

Mosbacher said the region was priority for OPIC, which is currently providing nearly \$1.8 billion in financing and political risk insurance to 38 projects in the area. Over the course of its 37-year history, OPIC has provided more than \$5.9 billion in support to more than 400 projects in the Middle East.

“The markets of the broader Middle East, with their significant populations and long history of entrepreneurship, present great opportunities to American investors,” Mosbacher said. “OPIC is hosting *Access to Opportunity in the Middle East* because we believe that with the support of American investment and technical knowledge, the region’s markets can grow even more quickly. And with the development of these markets will come myriad developmental benefits for the people of the broader Middle East.”

OPIC was established as an agency of the U.S. government in 1971. It helps U.S. businesses invest overseas, fosters economic development in new and emerging markets, complements the private sector in managing risks associated with foreign direct investment, and supports U.S. foreign policy. Because OPIC charges market-based fees for its products, it operates on a self-sustaining basis at no net cost to taxpayers.

OPIC's political risk insurance and financing help U.S. businesses of all sizes invest in more than 150 emerging markets and developing nations worldwide. Over the agency's 35-year history, OPIC has supported \$177 billion worth of investments that have helped developing countries to generate over \$13 billion in host-government revenues and create over 800,000 host-country jobs. OPIC projects have also generated \$71 billion in U.S. exports and supported more than 271,000 American jobs.

Visit OPIC on the web at [www.opic.gov](http://www.opic.gov).

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